

Cleveland Hedgehog Preservation Society Annual Report for 2011

This year as I'm chairman again I thought I would combine the annual report with the hedgehog figures article; after all they both refer to the society's performance and activities over the last year.

It has been another busy year for our hedgehog carers with a record breaking 430 hogs brought in for care which is quite an increase over last year's 385. We didn't release so many (percentage wise) with only 216 (50%) being returned to the wild, but we did over winter 80 compared with 51 last year. The split between males and females was more evenly matched than it has ever been before with 57% males and 43% females. We had 53 babies this year which is 1 less than the 54 last year and our busiest months were, as usual, July (69) and August (71) which were very similar to last year.

The sad part is that we lost 164 (38%) that either died or were put to sleep by vets. This is quite a rise from last years 26% but in line with previous years. I know I say it every year but I think it's worth mentioning again, if there was nothing wrong with the hedgehog then it wouldn't be with us in the first place. The fact that they've come into our possession means that they aren't well and we do our very best to remedy that, sadly they are often too far gone for us to do anything with and they either die or the vet makes the decision to euthanase.

We've had a slight increase in memberships with the society currently having 95 members, this time last year we had 89. Our memberships are now the main source of funding and the increase in membership costs from £3 to £5 doesn't seem to have put many people off rejoining, thank goodness. Also quite a few members include a donation with their membership which we are so very grateful for. Over the course of the year we've received a couple of larger donations, as I know that some people prefer to remain anonymous I would just like to say a big thanks to everyone who has donated to the society no matter how big or small, we do appreciate your help and couldn't manage without you. Some people have donated hedgehog food in various forms, we're very grateful for that too. Also I would like to congratulate Yvonne for being awarded a donation from Hawsker Dog Club for the third year in a row, and of course I would like to thank the dog club for it's continued generosity.

Our fund raising stall has been run down a little due to the lack of possible sales venues and people with time to run it. In fact the only time it came out this year was for the Yatton House open day at Great Ayton. We used to attend the

RSPCA open day at Great Ayton and this used to be one of our best fund raising days but sadly the event has become less popular over the last few years and so not so good for us. We were at the Guisborough Forest Festival handing out information leaflets and we've distributed leaflets to everywhere we think suitable such as Peter Barratts garden centre and several libraries.

We've started to provide hedgehog presentations again and so far have visited several schools with more bookings for later this year. Part of our aim as a charity is to educate the public about the plights of our prickly friend and where better to start than with the children.

We were contacted by a university student studying journalism and gave an interview for the campus news and we continue to share our hedgehog data with Toni Bunnell, a researcher for Hull University, in the hope that our work can be of use to other groups.

Chris Firth
Chairman
Cleveland Hedgehog Preservation Society.